MSP for jute

2518. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced any support price for jute procurement in the current year;

(b) if so, what is that and how to implement that decision; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes Sir, the Government has announced the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for TD-5 grade of Jute Ex-Assam at Rs. 850/- per quintal for 2002-03 season. Corresponding MSPs for other grades/varieties have also been fixed by the Government. Jute Corporation of India (JCI), a central nodal agency has been authorised to undertake price support operations if market prices of jute fall below MSP level.

Boost to biotech research in Seeds Policy

2519. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the new National Seeds Policy is likely to give a big boost to research in biotechnology by involving the private sector with the aim of hiking India's share in the global trade in seeds from 1 per cent to 10 per cent;

(b) whether investment in biotech research would enable higher productivity, greater nutrition value and shorter crop period; and

(c) if so, what are Government's plans to exploit this untapped potential, in order to achieve a higher level of food security and increased exports of agricultural product?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. The National Seeds Policy, 2002 provides for the establishment of an effective *sui generis* system for intellectual property protection in order to stimulate investments in research and development in frontier sciences, including

bio-technology, for development of new and improved varieties of plants to achieve higher yields, greater nutrition value, shorter crop period, higher food security, increased exports, etc.

Exploitation of Marine Wealth

2520. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many countries are exploiting the marine products from the ocean;

(b) if so, whether Government have any scheme or proposal to exploit marine wealth to feed the country's millions;

(c) if so, whether any budgetary provision has been made for 2002-2003; and

(d) what are the schemes/products Government propose to Extract?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have been implementing several Central/Centrally Sponsored Schemes in the coastal States such as Development of Marine Fisheries, Infrastructure and Post Harvest Operations, National Welfare of Fishermen and Coastal Aquaculture.

(c) The budgetary provision of Rs. 16.00 crores have been made for the year 2002-2003 for implementing these schemes.

(d) The schemes are aimed at increasing marine fish production and to provide better post harvest care to achieve higher per capita availability of fish.

Pill to prevent the effects of Nuclear Radiation

2521. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that medical scientists have been able to invent a pill, to prevent the effects of nuclear radiation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;